

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL
Division of Operations-Management

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 2003

TO: All Field Support Staff Personnel

FROM: Richard A. Siegel, Associate General Counsel

SUBJECT: Bridge Program for Position of Field Examiner

Pursuant to Article 7 of the Collective-Bargaining Agreement (Agreement) between the General Counsel and the National Labor Relations Board Union covering field office support staff employees, the Agency has agreed to announce each year, by a national posting, three Field Examiner Bridge Program positions. This memorandum is the national posting for Fiscal Year 2003. As in the past, selection for the program may be affected by budgetary restrictions. While applications will now be submitted to, and processed in, the Division of Operations-Management, rather than in individual Regions, the Associate General Counsel for Operations-Management will continue to be the selecting official. All eligible applicants will be evaluated in accordance with the provisions set forth in the complete Bridge Program, a copy of which has been posted with this memorandum. Successful applicants will serve in the Regions in which they currently work. Because a trainee is required to take 30 semester hours of college courses during the 3-year-training period, any selection(s) will be made July 31, 2003, so that selectee(s) may register for appropriate courses in the fall college semester.

The training will last 3 years with the possibility that it may be extended for 1 year, if necessary. Before completion of the training period, trainees are required to have completed 30 semester hours of selected college courses which will be paid for by the Agency. Unless the courses are available only during the day, they should be taken at night.

The Bridge Program provides that the trainee will perform support staff duties up to 40 percent of the time during the first year. The remainder of the workweek will be devoted to on-the-job Field Examiner training. During the second and third years of the program, 100 percent of the trainee's time will be devoted to on-the-job Field Examiner training.

Employees who wish to be considered for the program should submit their applications to the Division of Operations-Management, Attention: Executive Assistant Carole Coleman, by close of business on April 18, 2003.

Some of the program's more important provisions are outlined below. However, employees should read the complete program that has been placed on the Region's bulletin board.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for consideration, employees must currently be at grade GS-5 or above and be serving in a career or career conditional appointment. The length of required qualifying experience varies with the entry level of the trainee position:

52 weeks experience equivalent to GS-4 for GS-5,
52 weeks experience equivalent to GS-5 for GS-6, and
52 weeks experience equivalent to GS-6 for GS-7.

Substitution of appropriate education for experience may be made as outlined in OPM Qualification Standards.

Entry Level

If a successful candidate is currently serving at GS--5, -6, or -7, he or she will be assigned to the program at his or her present grade level. If a successful candidate is currently serving at the grade level GS-8 or above, he or she will enter the program at GS-7. Pay retention will be applied if a successful candidate is above the GS-7 level.

Promotions

A trainee who enters the program at one or more grade levels below GS-7 will be temporarily promoted to the next higher grade level after successful completion (i.e., attaining the required performance ratings) of each full year in the program up to and including grade GS-7. Thus, for example, if an employee at the GS-5 level is selected for the program, that individual would, depending on his or her progress, be eligible for a temporary promotion to GS-6 at the end of the first year and to GS-7 at the end of the second year. The individual would remain at GS-7 during the third year of the program. Upon successful completion of the third year, the trainee would be permanently promoted or reassigned to a GS-7 Field Examiner position. Employees who have less than 12 months in grade as a GS-7 while in the Bridge Program are eligible for promotion to GS-9 after 12 months in grade as a GS-7 Field Examiner. Employees who have 12 months in grade as a GS-7 while in the Bridge Program are eligible for promotion to GS-9 after 6 months in grade as a GS-7 Field Examiner. Employees who have 24 months in grade as a GS-7 while in the Bridge Program are eligible for promotion to GS-9 after 3 months in grade as a GS-7 Field Examiner. Employees who took a downgrade to GS-7 to enter the program and have served 36 months in the program as a GS-7 will immediately upon conversion to GS-7 Field Examiner be promoted to GS-9. Subsequent promotions will follow the Field Examiner merit promotion plan that establishes the journeyman level for Field Examiners at GS-13.

We look forward to receiving applications from interested employees.

R. A. S.